

# Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences Board of Regents

## Board Brief

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**Purpose:** **Information** X **Action** \_\_\_\_\_

**Subject:** Faculty Senate Report

### **Significant Issues:**

The first six months of my term as president of the Faculty Senate were marked by several challenges. First and foremost among a number of major events and changes affecting University life was BRAC integration and the establishment of the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) with subsequent implementation of parking restrictions on base. The concerns over distribution of a limited number of hang tags for garage parking seemed to consume the collective psyche of the University community. The parking situation evolved so rapidly during the first several weeks that there was quite a bit of confusion and frustration. University leaders and various working groups gathered information, monitored the situation, and made adjustments quickly. The Henry M. Jackson Foundation established a satellite lot with shuttle service for its employees, and students in particular really stepped up to form carpools. Hardship cases have been largely accommodated through an appeal process and procedures established for special circumstances, such as medical student surges. The situation seems to have stabilized, although some segments of the University, contractors and students, still bear much of the burden for finding commuting alternatives, and there are some remaining concerns regarding recruitment of graduate students, as well as recruitment and retention of faculty and staff.

The announcement of potential cuts to LRC subscriptions because of an end-of-fiscal year budget shortfall was another issue of major concern to the faculty, and this was communicated to University decision-makers by various groups at multiple levels. As a result, funds were diverted to cover subscription costs, and cuts were averted for the short-term. With a flat budget and continued rising subscription costs, this issue is likely to come up again. Therefore, the Faculty Senate was asked to establish an *ad hoc* committee to examine potential funding alternatives or cost-reducing solutions to maintain critical LRC resources and services. This committee has been established.

During the first half of this academic year, the Faculty Senate sponsored a number of events, including New Faculty Orientation Day on 13 October 2011 and the Staff Appreciation Assembly on 10

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November 2011. This year's recipient of the Outstanding Staff Award was 1LT Sean Baker for his exceptional dedication in providing IT support for the new SOM curriculum. Fast approaching in 2012 is the David Packard Lecture in March, which will consist of a two-day event to honor our guest, Dr. Murray Brennan, a renowned surgical oncologist at Sloan Kettering Memorial Cancer Center in New York. This year we are partnering with the newly established center for comprehensive cancer care at WRNMMC with the first day of clinically-focused activities taking place at the hospital (Wednesday, 14 March) and the second day (Thursday, 15 March) at USU. Dr. Brennan will give the Packard Lecture on 15 March at 3:00 p.m. in Sanford Auditorium. This collaborative effort is considered to be a great opportunity to foster integration between WRNMMC and USU and encourage collaborations among basic science and clinical researchers.

Education Day for 2012 is being moved to the August time frame in order to combine this event with new faculty orientation and faculty development activities. Efforts were made to find a suitable time that did not conflict with field exercises so that uniformed faculty would have the opportunity to fully participate. The theme will be inter-disciplinary education.

**Current and Future Concerns:**

Within the current fiscal environment, including uncertainties related to future deep budget cuts, added concerns, such as parking restrictions and potential cuts to library subscriptions, have had a detrimental effect on faculty morale. Sharing of information and process transparency are critical in this kind of environment. Lines of communication between Faculty Senate officers and University leaders have been excellent, and efforts will be made to continue this dialog to promote faculty input on funding priorities, hiring, and other decisions in support of the mission-critical needs of the University.